



## **CONTRACTOR AND SUPPLIER FORUM II**

### **September 18, 2014**

#### **Opening Remarks:**

**Matt Brown, Acting Director, District Department of Transportation**

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Good Morning.

I am Matt Brown, the Acting Director of the District Department of Transportation. Thank you for attending today's Contractor and Supplier Forum for the DC Power Line Undergrounding initiative, which is also known as DC PLUG. This is the second contractors forum jointly hosted by DDOT and Pepco.

Through a collaborative process initiated by Mayor Vincent C. Gray, the Government of the District of Columbia approved a multi-year \$1 billion power line undergrounding project to help prevent prolonged electric service outages during significant weather events. DC PLUG represents a public-private partnership between the District Government and Pepco that will result in the strategic undergrounding of overhead feeders in Wards 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8.

DDOT will construct the necessary underground facilities and Pepco will install the electric distribution system improvements. You have probably followed the strategic planning that DDOT and Pepco have undertaken, in collaboration with the utility regulator and consumer and community advocates, over the past year. And, you are already aware that DC PLUG is not a typical DDOT project.

The May 2014 legislation that authorized the District's power line undergrounding initiative mandated a triennial project planning and review process. In mid-June, DDOT and Pepco filed a joint application for approval of the Triennial Plan, with the Public Service Commission. The Triennial Plan covers the initial 3 year period (2015-2017). In August, we also filed the required financing application.

The Public Service Commission review period, for the triennial plan and financing application, which incorporates an extensive public hearing and stakeholder examination process, is still in progress. However, DDOT and Pepco want to ensure that contractors and suppliers are fully aware of the DC PLUG project scope and the engineering and construction strategy for the 21 feeders designated for undergrounding during the initial three-year period.

Today's forum is designed to both engage District businesses with pertinent project planning information on DC PLUG and foster team work and collaboration between businesses interested in DC PLUG contracting opportunities. We will review the:

- technical approach for undergrounding 21 priority feeders
- respective procurement strategies for DDOT and Pepco, and
- contractor registration processes for both entities

The Q & A and networking components, of this event, are also fundamental. The success of power line undergrounding is predicated on qualified, capable, and strategic teaming to bring together a combination of resources that will achieve the implementation and performance that District electric consumers expect.

The DC Council legislation that authorized the undergrounding program requires DDOT and Pepco to target qualified District businesses and residents for contracting and workforce opportunities. Our respective procurement strategies are designed to accomplish this requirement.

The DDOT/Pepco partnership is not just a mechanism for distribution of the undergrounding work effort and a financing arrangement. It is a mutual commitment to District business and resident sourcing for contractors, workforce, and materials.

The District and Pepco are committed to an open and transparent contracting process that gives District businesses an opportunity to perform engineering, electrical, and construction services for the undergrounding program. Of course, we recognize and appreciate our access to regional contractors that also have the strong operational capacity to successfully implement the power line undergrounding services.

We hope this project is an attractive opportunity for you, too. And, it is an opportunity for contractors that do not have an operational base in the District to engage qualified DC businesses and resident workers. With the substantial investment of public funding and fees that DC's electric customers will pay to cover the financing, an emphasis on DC businesses and hiring is particularly important.

Join us in the delivery of high quality services.

DDOT and Pepco have a team of representatives at today's meeting. Please feel free to reach out to us with questions you may have about this innovative program.

Thank you for your interest in the DC Power Line Undergrounding initiative.